

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, March 9, 2015.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. (Mayor Jordan arrived immediately afterwards)

ROLL CALL was answered by Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

ALSO PRESENT were Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; David Moran, Assistant City Manager; John Shay, City Solicitor; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

Mayor Jordan asked for a moment of silence in memory of residents Thomas Dwyer and Kerry Mullaney and former residents Betty Marie Griggs, Gerard J. “Jerry” Weber and Walter Vincent Dutton. He then led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: It was moved by Ms. Pope and seconded by Ms. Davis that the consent agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

Council thereby took the following actions:

Minutes:

Work Session, February 18, 2015
Interview, February 23, 2015
Regular Meeting, February 23, 2015
Interview, February 25, 2015
Work Session, February 25, 2015

Approved as Presented

Appointment to Advisory Groups: Council appointed Katherine Rekkas as a member of the Arts Advisory Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. McLaughlin requested “Update on Lake Dam Project” be added to the agenda. With this addition, it was moved by Mr. Putens and seconded by Ms. Davis that the agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATIONS:

ACE Educator Awards Ceremony: Mayor Jordan introduced Janet Mirsky and Melinda Brady, members of the Advisory Committee on Education (ACE). Ms. Mirsky explained the purpose of the ACE Outstanding Educator Awards, gave an overview of ACE’s other activities, and described the gifts and certificates to be presented tonight. She said this was the 20th consecutive year that the ACE Awards had been presented and thanked the City Council for its support over that period.

Ms. Mirsky recognized County Councilmember Todd Turner; Joe Schlosnagle representing the State Delegation; and ACE members Susan Breon, Jon Gardner, Sudhanshu Sinha, Veronica Martin-Frederick, David Whiteman, Don Rich and Elsie Waynes. She also recognized Councilmember Mach, ACE council liaison; and Rosalind Ceasar, ACE staff liaison.

The following 2015 award recipients were recognized, and gifts and citations were presented from ACE, the City Council, the County Council and the General Assembly.

Kristin Cahalan-Hudson	Greenbelt Elementary School
Cindy McCormick	Magnolia Elementary School
Maria Frontanes	Springhill Lake Elementary School.
Lesli Jackson	Turning Point Academy
Mahjoub Darrehmane	Robert Goddard French Immersion School
Cortland Jones	Greenbelt Middle School
Scott Horn	Eleanor Roosevelt High School

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS: George Boyce, Greenbelt Maker Space, said he had submitted a request to the City for permission for outdoor seating at Greenbelt Maker Space, similar to the outside seating for the New Deal Café. Mr. McLaughlin said staff will be in touch with Mr. Boyce regarding the request.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS: None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS: Mr. McLaughlin provided an update on the renovation project at Greenbelt Theater.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

LEGISLATION:

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 11 “Motor Vehicles and Traffic,” Article II “Operation of Vehicles” and Article III “Stopping, Standing and Parking” of the Greenbelt City Code

Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development, explained that changes to the City Code are recommended to clarify parking regulations, particularly as the regulations pertain to parking restrictions based on vehicle size, weight and class. She said that these changes will align vehicle classes in the City Code with vehicle classes in the State Code.

Ms. Craze said changes are also recommended to increase fines, strengthen enforcement of unregistered, disabled and out-of-state vehicles and vehicles with multiple violations. She noted that new language is included to regulate parking of commercial vehicles in residential zones and the operation of curbside (vehicle sales from residential locations).

Mr. Roberts expressed concern that the ordinance will prohibit a large number of residents from parking their work trucks on City streets. He also noted that the ordinance prohibits the parking of a moving truck on a City street, which had been an issue a few years ago when a resident received a violation notice. Ms. Craze advised that as long as the moving truck is actively involved, a citation would not be issued. She noted that the incident being referred to was for parking of the moving truck overnight. Mr. Roberts suggested allowances be made so that residents moving in and out of the City be allowed to park moving trucks on City streets for a designated number of nights.

Mayor Jordan expressed support for aligning the City Code with the State Code but said he does not support an increase in fees. He said he would be inclined to separate the ordinance.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council table the ordinance. The motion failed for lack of second.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council oppose the ordinance. The motion failed for lack of second.

Ms. Pope introduced the ordinance for second reading and moved that it be adopted. Ms. Davis seconded.

Frank Gervasi, 163 Research Road, said the way the ordinance is written, his work truck as well as several of his neighbors' work trucks will be in violation. He suggested Section 11.42.1 be rewritten to address this problem.

Ms. Mach said she supports the City Code being aligned with the State Code and an appropriate increase in fines but has concerns about how the proposed legislation affects commercial work trucks used by many residents for their employment.

Ms. Craze suggests Section 11.42.1, items 1, 2, 3 and 4, be removed from the proposed ordinance which will address the concerns raised about small commercial work trucks.

Mr. Shay noted that this will be a substantive change to the original ordinance and will need to return for second reading and adoption at the following meeting.

Ms. Mach moved that Council direct staff to: 1) amend Section 11.42.1 (a) to eliminate items 1, 2, 3 and 4; and 2) return amended ordinance for approval at the next meeting. Ms. Pope seconded.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council direct that the ordinance be amended to include the issuance of warning notices to moving trucks parked on residential streets that indicate a time limit. Ms. Davis suggested residents could contact the Police Department to obtain permission if additional time was needed for parking of the moving truck. Mr. Putens seconded.

Ms. Mach asked if this type of policy should be included in the ordinance or handled administratively. After discussion, it was suggested it be handled administratively. Ms. Craze said she would develop a policy.

Mr. Putens withdrew his second to the motion (Roberts). Mr. Roberts withdrew the motion.

The motion (Mach) passed 7-0.

STUDIO MOVIE GRILL AT BELTWAY PLAZA: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Kap Kapastin of Beltway Plaza provided a briefing on plans for the conversion of the Academy 8 Stadium Theater to Studio Movie Grill (SMG). He noted that he is pursuing an amendment to current State legislation to allow for the SMG to obtain a liquor license.

Mr. Kapastin said SMG will bring a new standard of excellence to Beltway Plaza and will provide approximately 200 new jobs, additional tax revenue, and a boost to the local economy.

Ms. Davis said she would want SMG employees to card everyone who orders alcoholic beverages. She added that she hopes SMG will look within the City for 50% of its workforce. Ms. Mach suggested the SMG offer living wage law to its employees.

State Legislation:

SB 373/HB377 – Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Revisions: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mr. Putens moved that Council support SB 373/HB 377. Ms. Pope seconded.

Mr. Roberts said he would support the legislation but would prefer to have the Renewable Energy Credits removed.

Ms. Davis said she supports the legislation but believes it will likely result in increased electric costs to the average customer.

The motion passed 7-0.

SB 481/HB1087 – Community Solar Energy Generating System Program: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mr. Roberts asked if the legislation would allow the City to start a solar energy generating system on rooftops. David Moran, Assistant City Manager, explained that the City could install solar panels on City buildings but said he would check to determine whether the City could start a grid and sell electricity back to residents.

Ms. Davis moved that Council support SB 481/HB 1087. Ms. Pope seconded.

Ms. Davis suggested City property in Greenbriar be considered for a possible solar farm.

The motion passed 7-0.

SB 371/HB 450 – SHA – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Ms. Davis moved that Council support SB 371/ HB 450. Ms. Mach seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

HB 682 – Municipalities – Charter Amendments – Referendum and Signatures Required for Petitions: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council support HB 682. Mr. Herling seconded.

Ms. Davis noted that HB 682 is enabling legislation that would allow a municipality to set its petition threshold anywhere between 5 and 20%. She explained the main problem is that the Board of Elections does not purge the voter registration list to remove names of deceased voters as well as the names of voters who have moved out of the area.

Mr. Roberts said the bill would make it easier for people to participate in government.

The motion failed 2-5. (Jordan, Davis, Putens, Mach, Pope)

Council suggested the bill be discussed with State legislators at the Legislative Dinner scheduled for Wednesday.

HB 741 – Maryland Cooperative Housing Act – Delinquency Period: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mr. Moran explained that he had discussed this bill with Greenbelt Homes Inc. today and it was not necessary for Council to take any action on the bill.

HB 597/SB 867 – Public High Schools – Synthetic Turf: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mr. Putens moved that Council oppose HB 597/SB 867. Ms. Mach seconded.

Ms. Mach and Mr. Putens noted concerns regarding synthetic turf fields. Ms. Mach said there were much better uses of Program Open Space (POS) funds than for synthetic turf fields at public high schools.

The motion passed 7-0.

COUNCIL REPORTS: Councilmembers commented on their attendance at the following events.

Maryland Municipal League (MML) Communications Committee Meeting – Ms. Mach
Cookies at the Bridge – Ms. Mach and Ms. Pope
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Air Quality Committee Meeting – Ms. Mach
Beech Tree Puppet Performance at the New Deal Café – Ms. Pope
COG Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Advocacy Committee Conference Call – Ms. Davis
Prince George’s County Municipal Association (PGCMA) Legislative Committee Meeting Conference Call – Mayor Jordan and Ms. Davis
MML Legislative Committee Meeting – Ms. Davis
COG Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Advocacy Committee Conference Call – Ms. Davis
City of Hyattsville Livable City Meeting - Ms. Davis (Representing Greenbelt Intergenerational Volunteer Exchange Service)
Greenbelt Youth Musical “Secret Circus” – Ms. Davis
Memorial Service for former Fire Department Chief Dutton – Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis and Mr. Putens
Prince George’s Chamber of Commerce State of the County Event – Mayor Jordan
National League of Cities Congressional Cities Conference – Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis, Mr. Putens, Ms. Mach, Mr. Herling and Ms. Pope

UPDATE ON LAKE DAM: Jessica Bellah, Community Planner, explained that the cost of materials for the Greenbelt Lake Dam had increased significantly (\$600,000 to \$930,000) since the project was initiated in 2010. She said the increase was due mostly to costs related to the filter blanket drain. Mr. McLaughlin added that the Maryland Department of the Environment had also expanded the scope of the project.

Mr. Moran noted the hearing for the Bond Bill for Greenbelt Lake Dam is scheduled for Saturday. After discussion, Council requested the matter be discussed with the State legislators at the Legislative Dinner scheduled for Wednesday.

MEETINGS: Council reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Mach moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Putens seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Mayor Jordan adjourned the regular meeting of Monday, March 9, 2015, at 11:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Murray
City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct report of the regular meeting of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, held March 9, 2015."

Emmett V. Jordan
Mayor